

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6266

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 8198

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, GR

SUBJ: FEARS OF STUDENT TROUBLES BEFORE ELECTION

1. SUMMARY. COMMEMORATIVE DEMONSTRATION SCHEDULED FOR NOVEMBER 15 AT ATHENS POLYTECHNION HAS WORRIED POLITICAL LEADERS AND CARETAKER AUTHORITIES WHO FEAR STUDENT RALLY COULD DISRUPT FINAL CARAMANLIS RALLY IN DOWNTOWN CONSTITUTION SQUARE SAME EVENING. ALL PARTIES HAVE COOPERATED IN EFFORTS TO CANCEL STUDENT GATHERING, BUT INDEPENDENT MARXIST AND MAOIST STUDENTS MAY BE PROCEEDING WITH THEIR PLAN FOR RALLY AND FOR STREET MARCH AFTERWARDS, ROUTE OF WHICH, AS ANNOUNCED, WOULD NOT APPROACH ND RALLY. END SUMMARY.

2. IMMEDIATELY AFTER LAST SATURDAY'S NATIONWIDE STUDENT ELECTIONS, EXTREME LEFT STUDENT LEADERS ANNOUNCED THAT LAST NOVEMBER'S POLYTECHNION MOVEMENT WOULD BE MARKED WITH CEREMONY NOVEMBER 15, FROM 5-7:00 P.M. AT MAIN GATE OF SCHOOL. RUMORS SUBSEQUENTLY RACED THROUGH VARIOUS PARTY HEADQUARTERS THAT EXTREMISTS HOPED TO BUILD ENTHUSIASM AT POLYTECHNION GATHERING TO DISRUPT ND RALLY A MILE AWAY WITH ULTIMATE INTENT TO PROVOKE CLASHES WITH SECURITY
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FORCES THAT COULD AFFECT TIMING OF ELECTIONS. SUCH TACTICS

WOULD BE OUT OF CHARACTER WITH PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS LAST THREE MONTHS, BUT MYTHOLOGY OF POLYTECHNION UPRISING IN RELATION TO POLITICAL EVOLUTION IN GREECE HAS NOW GAINED CONSIDERABLE FORCE. CARAMANLIS IS WIDELY BELIEVED TO HAVE SCHEDULED ELECTIONS ON NOVEMBER 17 IN ORDER TO DOWNPLAY POSSIBILITY OF CLASH WITH STUDENTS ON FIRST ANNIVERSARY. UNDER ELECTION CODE LAWS ALL PUBLIC GATHERINGS ARE ILLEGAL FROM MIDNIGHT FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 15 TO MONDAY NOVEMBER 18.

3. CARETAKER GOVERNMENT AND ND HEADQUARTERS REACTED VIGOROUSLY TO PROSPECT OF POLYTECHNION RALLY. AT MEETING OF ALL PARTY REPRESENTATIVES NOVEMBER 11, ALL AGREED TO URGE ABSTENTION FROM ANY PROVOCATIVE GATHERINGS BEFORE ELECTIONS AND TO DEFER POLYTECHNION MEMORIAL UNTIL LATER. CU/NF REPEATED THIS PLEDGE IN SEPARATE PARTY RELEASE, AND MAVROS SAME NIGHT IN HIS FINAL MAIN RALLY URGED NON-ATTENDANCE AT POLYTECHNION FRIDAY. LIKEWISE, UNITED LEFT SUPPORTERS WERE URGED NOVEMBER 13 AT MAIN RALLY TO BOYCOTT PLANNED POLYTECHNION GATHERING. THESE PLEDGES PUT CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE ON PAPANDREOU AT PASOK RALLY TONIGHT TO MAKE EQUALLY STRONG APPEAL FOR RESTRAINT. BASED ON RECENT PERFORMANCE, HIS YOUTHFUL FOLLOWERS ARE THE MOST LIKELY GROUP TO ATTEMPT TO HECKLE CARAMANLIS NOVEMBER 15. ALL ATHENS NEWSPAPERS HAVE ALSO URGED EVERYONE TO RESERVE THEIR PROPER EMOTION FOR POLYTECHNION MARTYRS UNTIL AFTER ELECTIONS WHEN CEREMONY CAN INCLUDE POPULACE GENERALLY AND NOT JUST STUDENTS. LATEST PROPOSED DATE IS NOVEMBER 19. POSTERS ARE NOW UP ANNOUNCING CONFLICTING DATES AND CEREMONIES FOR STUDENT GATHERINGS.

5. NOTWITHSTANDING PRESSURES, MAOISTS, ANARCHISTS, TROTSKYITES AND INDEPENDENT MARXISTS APPEAR STILL DETERMINED TO STAGE RALLY NOVEMBER 15. THEIR RALLY IS SUPPOSED TO BE FOLLOWED BY THREE-MILE MARCH TO KIISARIANNI SUBURB WHERE COMMUNIST PRISONERS WERE EXECUTED IN 1944 AND WHICH REMAINS TODAY STRONG COMMUNIST AREA. LINE OF MARCH IS WELL AWAY FROM DOWNTOWN ATHENS AND SHOULD ANY ROWDIES ATTEMPT TO SPILL OVER IN DIRECTION OF CARAMANLIS RALLY POLICE WILL HAVE AMPLE ROOM TO MANEUVER.

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